

## Message Text

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ACTION ACDA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 ACDE-00 AEC-05 CIAE-00 H-01

INR-05 IO-10 L-02 NSAE-00 OIC-02 OMB-01 PA-01 PM-03

PRS-01 SAJ-01 SAM-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 TRSE-00

RSC-01 NSC-05 AECE-00 /085 W  
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P R 141845Z NOV 74

FM USDEL MBFR VIENNA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0624

SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY

INFO USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

USNMR SHAPE

USCINCEUR

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 MBFR VIENNA 0417

FROM US REP MBFR

NOFORN

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM, NATO

SUBJECT: MBFR: POSSIBLE EASTERN MOVE TO RESTRICT

INITIAL REDUCTIONS TO GROUND FORCES

REF: A) VIENNA 2914; B) VIENNA 3095 (EXDIS/NOFORN);  
C) MBFR VIENNA 0078; D) MBFR VIENNA 0073

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: IN A CONVERSATION BETWEEN A US  
DELOFF AND CZECHOSLOVAK DEPREP MEISNER ON NOVEMBER 13,  
MEISNER INDICATED THAT THE EAST MIGHT MOVE IN THE  
NEAR FUTURE TO FURTHER DEVELOP ITS INITIAL REDUCTION  
STEP PROPOSAL IN THE DIRECTION OF A FOCUS ON GROUND

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FORCES. THIS REMARK RESURFACES AN IDEA SEVERAL TIMES

PUT FORWARD BY KHLESTOV IN THE SPRING, A FACT WHICH GIVES THE MEISNER REMARK PLAUSIBILITY. SUCH AN EASTERN PROPOSAL COULD TAKE SEVERAL DIFFERENT FORMS, ALL AIMED AT INCREASING THE ATTRACTION OF A SMALL INITIAL REDUCTION PROPOSAL FOR WESTERN OPINION. SUCH MOVES WOULD ALSO BE EVIDENCE OF TWO IMPORTANT POINTS: (1) THE SOVIETS DO CONTINUE INTERESTED IN AN MBFR AGREEMENT AT LEAST TO THE EXTENT THAT IT WOULD LIMIT THE MAXIMUM SIZE OF NATO FORCES; (2) THE MAIN VALUES THE EAST IS SEEKING TO ADVANCE ARE: SYMMETRICAL REDUCTIONS; PARTICIPATION OF THE BUNDESWEHR FROM THE OUTSET; AND INITIAL REDUCTIONS SHOULD BE SMALL. THE POTENTIAL NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES FOR THE WESTERN POSITION OF POSSIBLE EASTERN MOVES OF THIS KIND ARE AN ADDITIONAL REASON FOR A PROMPT DECISION TO INCLUDE NUCLEAR WEAPONS IN US PHASE I REDUCTIONS.

END SUMMARY.

2. DURING A NOVEMBER 13 BILATERAL CONVERSATION WITH US DELOFF (KAPLAN), CZECHOSLOVAK DEPREP MEISNER STATED THAT EASTERN REPLIES TO ALLIED QUESTIONS AT THE NOVEMBER 12 INFORMAL SESSION DID NOT REPRESENT THE EAST'S "FINAL WORD" ON DETAILS OF ITS INITIAL REDUCTION STEP PROPOSAL. US DELOFF SAID THAT NEGATIVE EASTERN REPLIES AT THE NOVEMBER 12 INFORMAL WHOLLY CONTRADICTED PREVIOUS BILATERAL EASTERN INDICATIONS OF FLEXIBILITY. EAST HAD INVITED ALLIED QUESTIONS, ONLY TO PROVIDE RIGIDLY NEGATIVE RESPONSES TO WESTERN QUESTIONS. MEISNER RESPONDED THAT FURTHER EASTERN FLEXIBILITY IN THE CONTEXT OF THE EASTERN FIRST STEP PROPOSAL WOULD EMERGE "IN ABOUT TWO OR THREE WEEKS." HE SAID THIS FLEXIBILITY WOULD EVIDENCE ITSELF IN TERMS OF "THE GENERAL PHILOSOPHY OF GROUND FORCE FOCUS AS OPPOSED TO TREATMENT OF ALL FORCES." IN THIS CONNECTION, MEISNER SAID EAST WAS HOPEFUL THAT PROGRESS ON TROOP REDUCTIONS WOULD BE MADE AT VLADIVOSTOK, WHERE, HE OBSERVED, SALT AND THE "RELATED" TOPIC OF MBFR MIGHT BE DISCUSSED.

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3. IN REFERRING TO THE EASTERN CONTENTION THAT NEGOTIATIONS MUST DEAL WITH ALL ASPECTS OF FORCE RELATIONSHIP AND NOT JUST GROUND FORCES, MEISNER SAID "THAT IS OUR OFFICIAL POSITION, BUT I WOULD NOT SAY HOW IMPORTANT THIS POSITION IS, BECAUSE I AM NOT A MILITARY MAN." HE CONTINUED THAT FORCE

REDUCTION WAS MORE A POLITICAL THAN A MILITARY TOPIC, AND STRESSED IMPORTANCE OF REACHING AN AGREEMENT NEXT YEAR. MEISNER RESTATED STANDARD EASTERN VIEWS ON OTHER ISSUES, PARTICULARLY STRESSING THE IMPORTANCE OF REDUCTIONS OF THE GERMANS FROM THE OUTSET.

4. COMMENT. MEISNER'S REMARKS BACK UP HINTS MADE BY SOVIET REP KHLESTOV ON FOUR SEPARATE OCCASIONS IN THE SPRING: IN THE INFORMAL SESSION ON APRIL 1, AND IN BILATERALS WITH US REP AND DEPREP ON APRIL 4; ON JUNE 9 WITH US DEPREP; AND ON JUNE 10 WITH FRG REP. FURTHER INDICATOR IS REMARK BY PROECTOR LATE SEPT CITED IN MOSCOW 14660. THE REMARKS MAKE IT APPEAR POSSIBLE THAT, IN THE NEXT WEEKS, THE EAST WILL ADVANCE SOME MODIFICATION OF ITS INITIAL REDUCTION STEP PROPOSAL LIMITING THE FOCUS OF REDUCTIONS WITH THE OBJECTIVE OF MAKING THE EASTERN INITIAL REDUCTION STEP PROPOSAL MORE ATTRACTIVE BOTH TO WESTERN GOVERNMENTS AND TO WESTERN PUBLIC OPINION.

5. AS WE ANALYZE IT, SUCH AN EASTERN MODIFICATION MIGHT TAKE ANY ONE OF FOUR FORMS, WHICH ALSO INDICATE THE RANGE OF FURTHER POSSIBLE SUBSEQUENT EASTERN MOVES AFTER AN INITIAL EASTERN MOVE. THESE WOULD INCLUDE: (1) DEFER AIR FORCE REDUCTIONS TO A SECOND PHASE, LIMITING INITIAL REDUCTIONS TO GROUND FORCES AND THEIR ARMAMENTS; (2) DEFER REDUCTION OF NUCLEAR ELEMENTS AND AIR FORCES, THUS LIMITING INITIAL REDUCTIONS TO CONVENTIONAL GROUND FORCES; (3) DEFER REDUCTIONS OF ALL ARMAMENTS TO A SECOND PHASE, LIMITING INITIAL REDUCTIONS TO PERSONNEL, BOTH GROUND  
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AND AIR; (4) DEFER REDUCTION OF ARMAMENTS AND OF AIR FORCE PERSONNEL TO A SECOND PHASE, LIMITING INITIAL

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S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 2 MBFR VIENNA 0417

FROM US REP MBFR

NOFORN

REDUCTIONS TO GROUND FORCE PERSONNEL.

6. SUCH MOVES WOULD HAVE THE PRACTICAL CONSEQUENCE  
OF MAKING IT DIFFICULT TO BRING TO BEAR POTENTIAL  
ALLIED LEVERAGE IN THE FORM OF REDUCTIONS OF  
NUCLEAR WEAPONS  
OR OF AIR FORCE PERSONNEL IN A  
PHASE I AGREEMENT IN ORDER TO OBTAIN THE ASYMMETRY  
IN REDUCTIONS WHICH IS THE ALLIES' MAIN NEGOTIATING  
OBJECTIVE. MOREOVER, A TIME WHEN PUBLIC AND PARLIAMENTARY  
PRESSURES ARE BUILDING UP IN THE UNITED STATES  
AND WESTERN EUROPE FOR UNILATERAL REDUCTIONS,  
MOVES OF THE KIND DESCRIBED ABOVE MIGHT BE  
PARTICULARLY EFFECTIVE AS REGARDS THEIR IMPACT. ON THE SURFACE,  
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THESE STEPS WOULD BE MOVES TOWARDS THE ALLIED POSITION OF  
FOCUSING ON GROUND FORCES. AS REGARDS THE POSTURE OF ALLIED  
GOVERNMENTS, AS DISTINGUISHED FROM PUBLIC OPINION, SUCH STEPS  
MIGHT HAVE ATTRACTION FOR THE ITALIANS, WHO STILL  
HAVE SOME RESIDUAL RELUCTANCE ON REDUCTION OF NUCLEAR  
WEAPONS AND FOR THE GERMANS AND BELGIANS, WHO AT  
PRESENT ARE COOL TOWARD REDUCTION OF AIR FORCE

MANPOWER AND AIRCRAFT.

7. ALTHOUGH THE MEASURES DESCRIBED WOULD HAVE THE EFFECT OF ENHANCING THE SUPERFICIAL PLAUSIBILITY OF THE EASTERN INITIAL REDUCTION STEP PROPOSAL, THAT PROPOSAL WOULD IN OUR VIEW REMAIN HIGHLY UNDESIRABLE FOR

THE FOLLOWING REASONS:

A. THE SMALL SIZE OF THE REDUCTIONS COULD HAVE A COUNTERPRODUCTIVE EFFECT ON CONGRESS, ESPECIALLY SO AFTER NEARLY TWO YEARS OF NEGOTIATION.

B. THE CENTRAL FEATURE OF THE SOVIET PROPOSAL IS AND WOULD CONTINUE TO BE THE PRINCIPLE OF SYMMETRICAL REDUCTIONS BASED ON EQUAL NUMBERS OR EQUAL PERCENTAGES OF THE TOTAL STRENGTH OF EACH SIDE. ACCEPTANCE OF THE PROPOSAL WOULD LEGITIMIZE THE EXISTING FORCE LEVEL DISPARITIES AND WOULD PREJUDICE FUTURE NEGOTIATIONS IN THE DIRECTION OF THE OVERALL SOVIET PROGRAM.

C. ACCEPTING THE PROPOSAL WOULD ALSO RESULT IN STRONG CRITICISM IN THE WESTERN PRESS AND PARLIAMENTS THAT THE WEST HAD ABANDONED THE POSITION THAT REDUCTIONS SHOULD DEAL WITH THESE DISPARITIES, A POSITION WHICH IT HAS FOR THE PAST TWO YEARS PUBLICLY PRESENTED AS ITS CENTRAL OBJECTIVE IN MBFR.

D. IT MIGHT BE AS DIFFICULT AND TIME CONSUMING TO REACH RAPID AGREEMENT ON THE SOVIET PROPOSAL AS ON THE PRESENT PHASE I ALLIED PROGRAM, BECAUSE THE SOVIET PROPOSAL WOULD PROBABLY POSE FOR THE ALLIES FOR SETTLEMENT IN DETAIL IN A FIRST AGREEMENT THE TOUGH ISSUES OF NATIONAL SUB-CEILINGS AND DISBANDMENT OF REDUCED  
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INDIGENOUS FORCES WHICH OTHERWISE MIGHT BE POSTPONED TO A SECOND PHASE. THE GERMANS PARTICULARLY WILL CONTINUE TO OPPOSE BOTH.

E. UNLIKE THE WESTERN APPROACH, THE SOVIET INITIAL STEP PROPOSAL HAS NO INTRINSIC RATIONALE WHICH WOULD PROVIDE A LOGICAL STOPPING POINT FOR THE REDUCTION PROCESS OR SERVE AS A BRAKE AGAINST FURTHER REDUCTIONS, NEGOTIATED OR UNILATERAL. IT COULD BE REPEATED AGAIN AND AGAIN IN FURTHER STAGES.

F. ACCEPTING THE SOVIET PROPOSAL AS THE BASIS OF NEGOTIATION WOULD LEAVE THE WEST WITH LITTLE OR NO LEVERAGE FOR OBTAINING EVEN A MODEST AMOUNT OF ASYMMETRY IN REDUCTIONS. THUS, THE ISSUE OF ADDING NUCLEARS TO OBTAIN ASYMMETRY OF

REDUCTIONS WOULD STILL BE POSED.

8. FRESH EVIDENCE OF A POSSIBLE SOVIET MOVE TO LIMIT THE FOCUS OF INITIAL STEP REDUCTIONS AND THE NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES OF SUCH A MOVE FOR THE WESTERN POSITION UNDERLINE THE IMPORTANCE OF PROMPT DECISION BY THE ALLIES TO INTRODUCE BOTH NUCLEAR ARMAMENTS AND AIR FORCE MANPOWER REDUCTIONS INTO THE VIENNA NEGOTIATIONS FOR THE PURPOSE OF DEVELOPING THE ALLIED PHASE I NEGOTIATING PROGRAM IN A MORE REALISTIC WAY THAN HAS BEEN POSSIBLE HERETOFORE.  
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